Blocks for captive mining operations

132. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that out of the 47 blocks for captive mining operation, 15 blocks were offered to power sector and 9 to steel and other sectors in 1994;

(b) whether Government are aware that except for some premining activities in the three to four blocks, there has been no significant activity and even captive mines linked to the supposedly fast track thermal projects have not yet got off the ground; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and the remedial steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

(d) whether the Government have since considered the recommendations of the report; and

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) Out of 47 non-coking coal blocks identified for captive mining operation upto 1994, 8 blocks were offered to power sector by the Screening Committee constituted on the Ministry of Coal. No coal blocks were offered to steel and other sector in 1994.

(b) Only few parties have submitted their mining plan. Out of the plans four plans have been approved so far.

(c) The reasons causing delay, among others are in getting techno-economic and environmental clearance, negotiation with Railway for feasibility of coal transportation from the mining block to power station and getting the mining lease from the State Governments for the captive blocks.

The Screening Committee monitors the progress made by the company in its meetings held periodically, Help is provided to the company on overcoming obstacles.

Danger to towns due to indiscriminate coal mining

133. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether some coal towns in the country are facing danger due to indiscriminate coal mining and violation of environment norms by the respective coal companies;

(b) if so, the details of those coal towns;

(c) whether those towns have been declared unsafe;

(d) if so, the steps taken to save those towns from collapse; and

(e) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) to (c) Danger to some portion of Jharia, Katras, Kirkend, Kendual and parts of Raniganj, Asansol, Barakar, Jamuria, Bahula and Haripur Townships exists due to the presence of old and unstable working of coal mining operations carried out in the pre-nationalisation era. The Apex Monitoring Committee (AMC) constituted for examining the environment of Raniganj Coalfield had examined 49 unsafe localities and observed that out these there is no apparent danger to 11 localities.

Based on a recent scientific study carried out by Central Mining Research Institute (CMRI), Dhanbad, portion of Katras, Jharia, Kirkend and Kendua towns are standing on old workings made prior to Nationalisation, are also considered to be unsafe.

(d) and (e) Parts of Raniganj, Asansol, Barakar, Jamuria, Bahula and Haripur townships are in the list of localities declared unsafe. Due to enormity of problem of shifting inhabitants from the unstable localities Hydro-Pneumatic Stowing of sand is being carried out at 5 locations in Raniganj Coalfield for

stabilisation of abandoned waterlogged coalfields workings.

With a view to solving the problem of subsidence and fire in Raniganj and Jharia coalfields in a comprehensive manner, a Committee has been constituted with Secretary (Coal) as the Chairman and representatives of Planning Commission, Ministry of Labour, Govt. of West Bengal and Bihar, DGMS, CIL, CMPDI and BCCL as members.

Production of coal in the country

134. SHRI MOHINDAR SINGH KALYAN: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the full details of the total production of coal in the country during the year 1995-96 and so far in 1996-97;

(b) the target fixed for the production of coal during the year 1996-97; and

(c) steps being taken by Government to achieve the target fixed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) and (b) The details of coal production in the country during 1995-96 and 1996-97 (upto January, 1997) and the target fixed for the production of coal during the year 1996-97 are as under:—

(million tonnes)

Company	1995-96	1996-97 (April—Jan.) (Provisional)	Target 1996-97
Coal India Ltd. (CIL)	237.28	197.86	252.00
Singareni Collieries Company Ltd. (SCCL)	26.77	21.91	30.20
Others (TISCO, IISCO & DVC)	6.08	5.05	6.45
TOTAL	270.13	224.82	288.65

(c) Steps taken to achieve the target for 1996-97 include expediting early completion of projects under implementation, re-organisation of existing mines and setting up of infrastructural facilities. The CIL has also been restructured in order to render it financially strong.

Private and foreign investment into non-captive coal mining

135. SHRI JAYANT KUMAR MALHOUTRA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to allow private and foreign investment into non-captive coal mining;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the foreign investment in non-captive mining is intended to give boost to setting up of new coal-based plants?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) and (b) The Government have subject to legislative changes, decided to offer new coal